UNITED
NATIONS

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Economic and Social Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/1992/23/Add.1
29 June 1992

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Substantive session of 1992
29 June-31 July 1992
Item 17 of the provisional agenda*

HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS

Report of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Programme budget implications of draft decisions I, II and III recommended for adoption by the Council

Statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 31 of the rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Council

A. Requests contained in the draft decisions

1. Under the terms of draft decision I, contained in the report of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights on its sixth session, 1/ the Economic and Social Council, taking note of the longstanding backlog of States parties' reports awaiting consideration by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, many of which have been pending for well over two years, and being aware that such an abnormal situation seriously undermines the implementation of the international Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, would authorize, on an exceptional basis, the holding of an extraordinary additional session of three weeks duration in the first half of 1993.

2. Under the terms of draft decision II, 1/ the Council would appeal to the States, parties to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights for more than 10 years, which have yet to submit even the initial report required by the Covenant, to do so as soon as possible. Furthermore,

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* E/1992/100.

the Council would note that those States might wish to avail themselves of the advisory services available from the Centre for Human Rights to assist them in the preparation of their overdue reports.

3. Under the terms of draft decision III, 1/ the Council would take note of the decision of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to inform the Government of the Dominican Republic of its offer, in pursuance of article 23 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, to send one or two of its members to advise the Government in relation to efforts to promote full compliance with the Covenant in the case of the large-scale evictions referred to in the Committee's reports. The Council would approve the Committee's initiative, subject to the acceptance of the Committee's offer by the State party concerned.

4. During the consideration of these three draft decisions, the Committee was not apprised of the programme budget implications of the proposed activities. The programme budget implications are therefore being presented to the Economic and Social Council for the first time.

B. Activities by which the proposed requests would be implemented

5. The activities arising from draft decision I, II and III have been analysed against the programme of work reflected in programme 35, "Promotion and protection of human rights" of the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997 (A/45/6/Rev.1) and related resources approved under sections 28 (Human rights) and 32 (Conference services) of the programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993.

6. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights normally holds one three-week session towards the end of each year. Travel and subsistence costs are paid to the 18 members of the Committee. Provision has been made in the 1992-1993 programme budget for one session annually, amounting to $236,300 for the biennium. Therefore, the addition of one extraordinary session in 1993 would require an additional $118,000 to cover the travel and subsistence costs of the members.

7. The proposed extraordinary additional session of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights would be convened at the United Nations Office at Geneva during the first half of 1993 for a duration of three weeks. The full cost of conference services to be provided to the Committee would amount to $655,800, broken down as follows:

Conference-servicing costs

	(Geneva, 3 weeks in 1993)	(US dollars)
(i)	Pre-session documentation (100 pages, 15 documents: A,C,E,F,R,S)	129 200
(ii)	Meeting servicing (30 meetings: A,C,E,F,R,S)	181 200
(iii)	In-session documentation (50 pages, 5 documents: A,C,E,F,R,S)	61 200
(iv)	Post-session documentation (15 pages, 1 document: A,C,E,F,R,S)	18 400
(v)	Summary records (30 documents: E,F,S)	265 800
	Total	655 800

8. The activities relating to the implementation of draft decision II and III, which are subject to the acceptance and/or requests of the States parties concerned, would be undertaken in due course within existing resources.

C. Proposals for accommodation of additional 1992-1993 activities and related additional requirements

9. It will be recalled that, under the procedure established by the General Assembly in resolution 41/213 of 19 December 1986 and in effect starting with the biennium 1990-1991, a contingency fund is established for each biennium to accommodate additional expenditures derived from legislative mandates not provided for in the programme budget. Under the same procedure, if additional expenditures are proposed that exceed the resources available within the contingency fund, those activities can be implemented only through redeployment of resources from low-priority areas or modifications of approved activities. Otherwise, such additional activities would have to be deferred until a later biennium.

10. No activities within section 28 (Human rights) of the approved programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993 have been identified for termination, deferral, curtailment or modification during the current biennium to finance the travel costs of the 18 members of the Committee. In the event that the resources from the contingency fund are not available for the travel and subsistence costs, then the extraordinary meeting would have to be postponed.

11. The estimates for conference-servicing costs are based on the theoretical assumption that no part of the conference-servicing requirements would be met from within the permanent conference-servicing capacity under section 32 of the approved programme budget, and that additional resources would be required for temporary assistance for meetings. The extent to which the Organization's permanent capacity needs to be supplemented by temporary assistance resources can be determined only in the light of the calendar of conferences for 1992-1993. However, as indicated in paragraph 32.4 of the programme budget, the 1992-1993 level of resources for temporary assistance for meetings was estimated on the basis of previous experience to accommodate not only meetings known at the time of the budget preparations but also meetings that would be authorized subsequently, provided that the number and distribution of meetings and conferences in the biennium 1992-1993 were consistent with the pattern of meetings in past years. On that basis, it is estimated that no additional resources would be required under section 32 of the programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993 as a result of the adoption of draft decision I.

D. Summary

12. Should the Economic and Social Council decide to adopt draft decision I, an additional appropriation in the amount of $118,000 would be required under section 28 of the programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993. Subject to the guidelines for operation and use of the contingency fund, this appropriation would be requested in the context of revised estimates to be submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session.

Notes

1/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1992, Supplement No. 3 (E/1992/23), chap. I.